

VIETNAM WAR

(Mr. REUSS (at the request of Mr. KENNEDY) was granted permission to extend his remarks at this point in the RECORD and to include extraneous matter.)

Mr. REUSS. Mr. Speaker, the intensification of the war in Vietnam has brought on a renewed wave of discussion and debate of our Vietnam policy, both in Congress and in homes and public forums across the country. For discussions to be meaningful and debate fruitful, the participants must be informed and their arguments reasoned.

The Milwaukee Journal devotes the front page of its editorial section of Sunday, February 6, 1966, to three articles which review the Vietnam problem in depth:

(By Marriner S. Eccles)

Under no circumstances should we escalate the war in Vietnam. Our position there is indefensible. Contrary to Government propaganda we were not invited by, and have no commitment to any representative or responsible government of South Vietnam. We are there as an aggressor in violation of our treaty obligation under the United Nations Charter. We have not observed either the letter or the spirit of our obligations with respect to our actions in Vietnam. As a result, we have the opposition of not only the entire Communist world but the rest of the world as well, with few minor exceptions.

The facts are, the Geneva Agreement of 1954, after the defeat of the French, affirmed the independence of the colonial government of Vietnam and called for an end to hostilities. The British and the Russians were co-chairmen of that conference.

An interim trusteeship was agreed upon whereby the French would preside in the south and the Vietminh in the north for 2 years, ending in a national election in 1956 when the Vietnamese people would choose their own government. The United States Vietnam lobby did not permit that election to be held knowing that Ho Chi Minh, the Communist leader of the north, was so popular he would unquestionably win the election.

John F. Kennedy, then Senator, in a major speech in April 1954, warned against any negotiated solution that would allow participation in the Vietnamese Government by Ho Chi Minh. The Communists, he said, would eventually take over because they were so popular. In his memoirs Eisenhower stated that had an election been held in Vietnam, as provided in the Geneva accord, an estimated 80 percent would have voted for Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader.

Diem was brought to the United States in 1950, after a 17-year, self-imposed exile, under the auspices of Michigan State University, and here he found strong support in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, his brother being a Catholic bishop. Cardinal Spellman became a strong supporter, also Justice Douglas, Joseph Kennedy and his son, John F. Kennedy, General Lansdale (the CIA man in Saigon), CIA Director Allen Dulles, General Donovan, and other strong anti-Communists. They were largely responsible for bringing about Diem's ascension to the premiership of South Vietnam in July 1954.

From his first day in office he set about crushing opposition and concentrating power in small nepotist groups. Diem's targets included the private armies of the religious sects and the anti-Communist Vietnamese leaders who were also anti-Diem. He wasn't looking for popularity. He knew his support was slim—that he would have trouble with the majority of the population who had been supporting the Vietminh in the long war against the French; therefore, force was the only way he could effectively reach his people for the democratic alternative. Due to the paid propaganda of the United States-Vietnam lobby his dictatorial tactics were not

widely reported in the American press until 8 years later when his brother was assassinated by the military within his own government. Since that time South Vietnam has been unable to develop a stable or responsible government, as evidenced by the many changes in leadership.

The South Vietnamese Communists, with the help of the North Vietnamese, defeated the French. They are now fighting for the independence of their country against the non-Communist South Vietnamese. In short, it is a civil war with the Vietcong supported by North Vietnamese and the South Vietnamese held together and supported by the United States. The South Vietnamese Catholics (about 10 percent of the population), the property owners and business interests in the large cities are the strong anti-Communist supporters of South Vietnam.

DESTROYING VIETNAM

We have provided large amounts of military and economic aid and supplied them with military advisers, but until the present administration came into office we did not furnish American troops to help fight their war, until it was apparent they were being defeated. We have gradually taken over the direction of their Government as well as their war until now it has become an American war rather than a Vietnamese war. Why go to Vietnam to drive the Communists out when we can't get them out of Cuba, 90 miles from our shore?

The North Vietnamese supplied troops to the Vietcong only after American troops entered the war in large numbers and we commenced heavy bombing of North Vietnam and the Vietcong. It was then that China and Russia publicly announced they would give all the military and economic aid necessary to the North Vietnamese in order to defeat the U.S. aggressors. As a result, we now have allied against us the powerful countries of China and Russia, including all the Communist world, with practically no support from the rest of the world in spite of Rusk's and McNamara's recent appeals to NATO. Under these conditions we cannot win. You cannot defeat people in a jungle war where the majority is against you and it is impossible to tell your friends from your enemies.

We are rapidly destroying the very country we propose to save—South Vietnam—as well as killing thousands of its men, women, and children by our incessant and heavy bombing of the Vietcong. We are adding to our burdens tens of thousands of refugees that we must feed, clothe, and house. What would the situation be if North Vietnam, with the help of China and Russia, should retaliate by bombing Saigon and the other principal cities in South Vietnam? Even if we won their freedom and turned the country over to them they have no capacity for democracy or self-rule.

With a bigger war shaping up on the ground and fighting 9,000 miles away, logistics are almost an insoluble problem. With troop strength only 158,000 in November our logistic needs shot up from 75,000 tons in February to 700,000 tons in November. The jet aircraft are burning more than a million gallons of fuel a month. Ports are clogged—ships wait 10 days to 2 months to unload cargoes. What will the situation be if we undertake to double or quadruple our fighting forces, planes, helicopters, etc.?

Our concept of negotiating a peace reveals total insensibility to the other parties' problem. The antagonists cannot negotiate their own peace terms. The matter should be turned over to an impartial body, like the United Nations.

If the war is escalated, before many months the United States will probably be required to go on a war footing and our present domestic prosperity will be ended. Inflationary pressures will greatly increase and the position of the dollar in the world market will be further jeopardized unless we bring about a balanced budget through increasing taxes and cutting back domestic programs.

"WE FALL INTO A TRAP"

It may be the only way to win the war.

control the course of the war—it is now in the hands of the Chinese and the Russians. As cochairman of the Geneva conference the Russians have refused to take any part in bringing about a peaceful settlement. They may be glad to have us tied down in a most unpopular war in Asia, which greatly weakens our position in NATO as well as throughout the world. They must avoid giving support to Peiping's charges that they are conspiring with President Johnson to end the war. To do otherwise would greatly weaken their own leadership in the Communist world.

It would seem we have fallen into a trap that neither China nor Russia is willing to let us get out with either face-saving or victory.

We could not have chosen anywhere in the world a more difficult place to challenge the Communists and more to the liking of China—on her border. How could we have been so blind and misinformed? The decisions were made by the President and a handful of advisers in the White House, State and Defense Departments without debate or prior approval of the Congress. This is dictatorship that has no place in our democracy. The public has not been advised as to what was taking place. They have been misinformed and brainwashed to such an extent that opponents are accused of being disloyal and supporting the enemy and patriotism has come to mean unquestioning support of the administration.

Blindly accepting the Government's position in Vietnam is more senseless than blindly accepting its domestic programs because mistakes in Vietnam can be far more disastrous. The real patriots today are the Members of Congress and other public leaders who have the courage to oppose the administration and urge it not to escalate the war but to get out of Vietnam at the earliest possible date. This would be the least costly from every standpoint—even our world prestige would be enhanced.

SAVE LIVES, NOT FACE

If our leaders insist on escalating this war to a finish it is likely to be the most disastrous of the wars we have fought, measured by cost, loss of life and prestige throughout the world, and the most futile. It could lead to World War III—the United States alone fighting the Communist world. This could trigger an atomic war which all the world dreads.

The alternative is to recognize China and bring her into the United Nations before she becomes an atomic power in 3 to 5 years. Even her avowed enemies, India and Russia, have voted for her inclusion in the U.N.

The billions being wasted on the war in Vietnam, if used to eliminate mass poverty and illiteracy in the undeveloped countries, would do far more than aggression to prevent the spread of communism.

We must recognize that it is just as important, if not more so, for the Communists to save face in Asia as it is for the United States. We should be less interested in saving face and more interested in saving lives. Great nations over the years have survived by withdrawing from an untenable position. It can be done with dignity. Certainly we are a sufficiently great nation to relieve the world of the fear of war that is so terrifying. We would win approval of the world and gain in stature.